

From: Wagner, Lydia (ECY)
Sent: Fri 7/22/2016 9:22:41 PM
Subject: Deschutes River Watershed Project Changes

Hi **Everyone**,

I'm sending this email to the Deschutes TMDL Distribution List I set up to provide Deschutes Advisory Group (DAG) meeting information, grant opportunities, and other project related items. I made a few announcements at the July 21 Deschutes Advisory Group (DAG) meeting and while they will be included in the meeting notes, those won't get posted until early-mid August and I didn't want to wait that long to tell you.

There are a few significant **Ecology staff changes** related to the **Deschutes River Watershed cleanup projects**. As a reminder these projects include tracking implementation actions included in the Deschutes River TMDL (*completed December 2015*) and the Budd Inlet Dissolved Oxygen TMDL (*now in early development*). The changes I want to highlight today are:

- First, **Mindy Roberts**, Environmental Assessment Program, Project Lead, left Ecology in early June, to work on Puget Sound issues for a non-profit agency. Anise Ahmed, who has worked with Mindy on this project for many years, is stepping in to fill that void. You're in great hands!
- Second, beginning August 1, **Dustin Bilhimer** is moving back to our Headquarters office to work on the Puget Sound Dissolved Oxygen TMDL and Study. He will still have some interactions with the DAG due to the interface of the Puget Sound and Budd Inlet. So fortunately you haven't seen the last of Dustin.
- Lastly, also beginning August 1, **I am no longer the Water Quality Program Lead** for this project. I'm taking over a project in Grays Harbor County that Dustin was working on.

I have mixed emotions about my change. On the one hand, I'm very excited about working on a different project, meeting new partners and stakeholders, and getting familiar with another watershed. On the other hand, I'm the one who put together the Deschutes Advisory Group in 2009, and I feel a lot of ownership, protectiveness, and responsibility to this group. While there have been a lot of DAG stakeholder changes during these years, the Ecology staff changes have been very limited, which provided continuity in background project knowledge and stakeholder relationships.

This has been, and continues to be, a very challenging project. I've strived to develop good working relationships with all the stakeholders, partners, and interested citizens. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and experience about the various issues related to water quality in general or on specific areas of the watershed. I appreciate your patience as I became more educated about the world of TMDLs, something I knew nothing about when I started in this position in June 2008. I have learned so much about TMDLs from my routine work and from you. I am confident that your continued dedication and commitment to these projects will result in water quality improvements in the Deschutes River, Capital Lake, Budd Inlet, and the related tributaries.

We don't know when a new staff person will get assigned the Deschutes Watershed projects. I will continue as the DAG meeting facilitator and coordinator for the September 15 and November 17 meetings. For anything else, please direct your questions, meeting requests, or other needs to my supervisor at Andrew.Kolosseus@ecy.wa.gov or 360-407-7543.

It's been a privilege working with you on these projects.

 **Lydia**

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